

Message Text

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ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AF-08 MC-02 L-03 AID-05 IGA-02

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R 061055Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO AMEMBASSY LAGOS

SECSTATE WASHDC 9287

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS, IT, NO

SUBJECT: GOI REQUEST TO SELL APC'S TO NIGERIA

REFS: (A) LAGOS 8806; (B) STATE 190212

1. EMBASSY HAS DISCUSSED QUESTION OF OTO-MELARA SALES TO NIGERIA, MAKING THE POINT THAT THE BALL IS NOW IN THE ITALIAN COURT. HOWEVER, IN THE LIGHT OF LAGOS 8806, IT IS NOT CLEAR TO US THAT THERE IS A BALL IN PLAY AT ALL.

2. AS THE DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, THE QUESTION OF THIRD COUNTRY SALES BY ITALIAN LICENSEES IS CLOSE TO ITALIAN HEARTS. THERE ARE OBVIOUS ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS. THERE IS ALSO A COMPLEX OF POLITICAL INTEREST INCLUDING THE IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF ATTITUDES TOWARD STANDARDIZATION WITHIN THE ALLIANCE. THE ITALIANS, AS DO OTHER ALLIES, PERCEIVE THE LIKELY SUBSTANCE OF FUTURE STANDARDIZATION TO DEPEND HEAVILY ON CO-PRODUCTION AND LICENSING. THEY EXPECT, AS LIKELY DO THE OTHER ALLIES, THAT THE ISSUE OF THIRD-COUNTRY SALES WILL BE RESOLVED IN A WAY GIVING THEIR INDUSTRIES BETTER ACCESS TO OTHER MARKETS.

3. OUR UNDERSTANDING IS THAT AMONG OTO-MELARA'S MANY REQUESTS FOR APPROVAL OF SALES TO THIRD COUNTRIES, THE DEAL WITH NIGERIA

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REPRESENTS THE STRONGEST POSSIBILITY OF SUCCESS IN THE COMPANY'S

ESTIMATION. WE EXPECT THAT THE COMPANY WILL AGAIN BE SEEKING APPROVAL THROUGH THE MFA IN THE NEAR FUTURE. IF IN FACT FMC HAS AGREED TO GIVE THE NIGERIAN APC BUSINESS TO OTO-MELARA, THEN AS THE DEPARTMENT SUGGESTS, IT REMAINS FOR OTO-MELARA TO REACH AN AGREEMENT WITH THE NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT. IN THAT CASE THE DENOUEMENT IS LARGELY BEYOND OUR ABILITY TO AFFECT. HOWEVER, IF THE INTER-COMPANY AGREEMENT IS NOT FIRM, WE WILL FIND OURSELVES BACK IN THE MIDDLE AND SUBJECT TO ACCUSATIONS OF BAD FAITH.

4. THE EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION THE DEPARTMENT AND EMBASSY LAGOS CAN PROVIDE AS TO THE CURRENT STATUS AND LIKELY FUTURE COURSE OF THIS MATTER. VOLPE

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